

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Urban Design Plan



CITY OF CONCORD
PLANNING & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT
66 UNION STREET SOUTH
CONCORD, NC 28025



**RE: Request For Qualifications
City of Concord
Urban Design Plan**

To Prospective Firms:

The City of Concord is seeking a Statement of Qualifications from firms that are interested and experienced in preparing an urban design plan for a downtown setting (Downtown Concord). It is the intent of the City to hire a qualified consultant (the firm may act as a prime consultant for sub-consultants) to complete a study that will guide public and private investment decisions in Downtown and immediate areas for the next five years.

The successful candidate(s) will be expected to respond to a market analysis (study currently underway) and create recommendations for the built environment based on short-term and long-term implementation. The candidate must also provide evidence of a proven track record with identifying public and private investment opportunities and creating effective forums for public participation. It is estimated that it will take at least six (6) months to complete the plan.

Please review this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) document and the supporting materials that are enclosed. The submittal deadline is **October 9, 2015**. Once responses have been submitted and evaluated, the City will schedule interviews with selected firms that possess the strongest qualifications. A final selection will be made once the interviews are completed.

We invite your serious consideration.

CITY OF CONCORD

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ATTACHMENTS

- "A" STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATION FORM
- "B" NON-COLLUSION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

EXHIBITS

- "1" STUDY AREA



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

for developing an
URBAN DESIGN PLAN

I. OVERVIEW

Incorporated in 1806, the City of Concord is located approximately 20 miles from downtown Charlotte and has convenient access to the region's cultural, recreational, educational, and business opportunities. The region, comprised of a 40-mile radius containing 14 counties, has grown at a record pace over the past fifteen years and has emerged as a single large economic unit that interacts with the global economy. Concord is one of the fastest growing cities in the region, with a population of 85,560 encompassing 60 square miles of land area.

Concord serves as the County seat of Cabarrus County, NC and has a City Council/Manager form of government. The City is strategically positioned along the I-85 corridor and the only metro ring city with two centers; the traditional downtown at the metro's eastern perimeter and Concord Mills area at the I-485 Beltway west of downtown Concord. As such, the city has become a highly desirable location for business relocation, new commercial development and rapid residential growth. Concord is home to Charlotte Motor Speedway, Concord Mills Shopping Mall, Oiles America Corporation, S&D Coffee, and top NASCAR race teams. Recent additions to the economic landscape include distribution centers for FedEx and Amazon, plus Alevo, a manufacturer of large-scale battery systems for electricity storage. Alevo's technology, Gridbank, will be manufactured at the Victory Industrial Park on U.S. 29, a 3.5 million square foot former Phillip Morris cigarette manufacturing facility.

Concord continues to achieve significant accomplishments in the revitalization of its downtown area. Public investment in streetscape improvements, the creation of incentive programs, preparation and implementation of a downtown master plan and the formation of a Municipal Service District are just a few of the accomplishments driving this revitalization effort.

From July 2014 to July 2015, 20 unique projects have invested \$23,222,373 in public and private investment in downtown Concord. Private projects include Church Street Lofts, a \$2.4 million project that's redeveloping a former furniture store into 29 apartments opening in October 2015. Public projects include a new 76,000 square foot, \$20 million Concord City Hall opening in December 2015. These follow on the 2012 completion of Carolina Courts, a 47,000 square foot indoor sports complex, and the 2014 completion of Rotary Square, a new public square and farmer's market.

In order to continue the momentum that has developed since the initial master plan was created, the City seeks to identify reinvestment strategies to strengthen the historic downtown area.

Using this Request for Qualifications, the City is seeking firms with extensive experience in helping local business leaders, entrepreneurs, and economic development professionals document details about downtown Concord's current conditions and creating a physical development plan to support public and private investment.

II. PLANNING BACKGROUND

The City completed a Downtown Master Plan in 2007 when the planning process included public input sessions/meetings and the creation of steering committees to collect, review, and share information. This plan involved components including: Economic Analysis, Public and Private Investment, and Parking Management. The plan covered a 5-7 year period due to anticipated private and public investment, which exceeded expectations as outlined in the previous section.

The 2015-2016 update to the Downtown Master Plan will focus on three areas: Parking, Market Analysis, and Urban Design.

Parking Study

City planning staff and a consultant created the Downtown Parking Plan from March 2015 to September 2015, with initial recommendations focusing on restriping on-street parking, paid parking options, and construction of a parking garage to meet future parking demand, notably from the Cabarrus County Courthouse.

Market Analysis

City planning staff and a consultant began a Market Analysis for downtown in August 2015, with a draft study due in November 2015, and will conclude the study by Fall 2016. The study will assess existing and future supply/demand opportunities for residential, retail, office and mixed-use development in downtown and its immediate neighborhoods.

Urban Design

This plan will be influenced by findings from the Parking and Market Analysis studies and may include public preference surveys, development scenarios, and design guideline recommendations.

III. STUDY AREA

A map that depicts the study area is attached and labeled (**Exhibit #1**). This study area represents the Municipal Service District (MSD), downtown Concord's business improvement district.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Urban Design Plan

Building upon the Downtown Master Plan's Parking and Market Analysis findings, the City of Concord desires to engage a consultant who can demonstrate qualifications and experience in key areas of Urban Design listed in the tentative plan outline listed below.

As part of this Urban Design Plan, the City will incorporate a federal grant (REACH - Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health) to plan and implement Active Living elements within the plan. Elements to be covered by the grant are highlighted with **REACH/Active Living** below. The City anticipates three to five (3 to 5) meetings will be needed between the consultant and others (i.e. City, general public). The following elements are not necessarily sequential, but should be part of a Scope of Work for an effective plan.

A. Inventory

- a. Stakeholder interviews
- b. Initial assessment of existing conditions including:

Conceptual Site Planning

Review of Market Analysis for sites identified for future development

Streetscape Planning

- a) **Paving** (paving materials and pavement markings, on sidewalk and in street)
 - Sub-Analysis of "The Square" (intersection of Union St. and Cabarrus Ave.) for a "shared space" design concept
- b) **Landscaping** (i.e. street trees, container plantings)
 - Sub-Analysis of street tree planting space concepts and base covers (metal grates, brick/stone block, crushed stone)
- c) **Street Furniture** (i.e. seating, bike racks, outdoor dining, public restrooms)
 - Sub-Analysis for location of paid-parking infrastructure (i.e. pay stations)
 - Sub-Analysis for opportunities/locations for movable/fixed seating for public spaces (Rotary Square, Historic Courthouse front lawn, Cabarrus County Governmental Center front plaza, planned Market Street square) (**REACH/Active Living**)
 - Sub-Analysis for opportunities/locations for on-street bike corrals and bike racks located near building entrances (**REACH/Active Living**)

B. Community Outreach

Research and Evaluation

- a) Researching and presenting Best Practices in response to local conditions
- b) Consulting with City planning staff to review content in advance of Public Meetings

Public Participation

- c) Conducting or participating in charrettes or other public input forums
- d) Creating established Goals/Objectives for the study

C. Policy

Zoning/Development Code Review and Update

- a) Reviewing the City's *Concord Development Ordinance*, Center City (CC) Design Standards, for ability to support human-scaled urbanism (**REACH/Active Living**)
- b) Reviewing the City's *Technical Standards Manual*, Article II: Streets & Pedestrian Paths, for ability to support human-scaled urbanism (**REACH/Active Living**)

D. Implementation Strategy and Action Plan

- a. Creating a Physical Development Plan for potential sites (identified by Market Analysis and Urban Design phases) based on input from:
 - i. City staff (multiple departments)
 - ii. Public input (In-person meeting and online survey)
 - iii. City Council
- b. Implementation matrix/Action Plan assigning phases and responsible parties

The scope of work will be finalized with the selected consultant and then submitted to the City Manager for approval. The City of Concord intends that the contract be for no more than six (6) months, to complete the original tasks under an agreed-upon schedule. The City also reserves the right to request additional related tasks as needed.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA/SELECTION PROCESS

A Selection Committee of City staff and/or other designated participants will review the proposals. The Selection Committee will invite the top firms for an interview on **October 26 – November 6, 2015**. The Selection Committee will be looking for the most qualified firm based on their track record in growing communities with similar characteristics. Providing examples in the submittal of similar work is strongly recommended. The rating system below will be used in evaluating proposals.

- A. 45% -Experience/Technical Competence** – This includes the personnel directly involved with the preparation of the study, experience with communities that have similar characteristics, past performance, and references.
- B. 30%- Responsiveness** – The adequacy with which the consultant demonstrates competence in the areas set forth in the RFQ.
- C. 20%-Innovativeness** – The use of unique analytical tools, community decision making processes, and / or cutting-edge approaches to creative problem solving.
- D. 5%- Presentation/Packaging**

CONSULTANT SELECTION SCHEDULE

Activity	Date
Distribute RFQ to Consultants	September 15, 2015
Deadline to submit questions or clarifications in writing	September 22, 2015
Submittals due to City	October 9, 2015
Review of submittals by City/Committee	October 12-16, 2015
Notification of Finalists	October 20, 2015
Interview of Finalists	October 26 - November 6, 2015
Selection of Consultant	November 10, 2015
Scope of Work/Contract Negotiations	November 10-20, 2015

Note: The City will negotiate the final contract with the selected firm; however negotiations are intended to agree upon cost, fees, scope of work, and schedule. Firms must be able to provide the appropriate levels of insurance and list the City of Concord as an additional insured party.

VI. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Consultants interested in the project are invited to submit four (4) original copies of the RFQ that validates experience in the key areas mentioned previously in the format listed below:

1. Cover Letter
A Cover letter printed on the respondent's letterhead and signed by a principle of the respondent's company. This should be the first page.
2. A Statement of Business Responsibility Form (**Attachment "A"**)
3. Non- Collusion Disclosure Statement Form (**Attachment "B"**)
4. Identify through a narrative discussion your experience preparing urban design plans. Provide specific examples of studies that highlight experience in key areas.
5. Provide resumes of personnel intended to serve on the project team. Indicate the Project Manager for the project and describe in detail the role and responsibilities of each professional.
6. Provide client references for similar activities including contact persons, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers and a brief project narrative.
7. Indicate availability for the project including available start date and any other conditions that restrict availability of work on this project. Describe current workload in relation to company resources.

This RFQ is being issued by the City of Concord to solicit proposals from qualified urban design consulting firms for an Urban Design Plan. This RFQ contains the required information needed by qualified consulting firms for submission of proposals. The RFQ will be issued and administered in accordance with the Purchasing Rules and Regulations of the City of Concord. The selected consultant will be required to furnish the City of Concord evidence of insurance coverage.

The person responsible for administering the RFQ is Scott Adams, Senior Planner, Planning & Neighborhood Development, 704-920-5124, adamss@concordnc.gov.

All submissions must be received by 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, **October 9, 2015**. The physical address is 66 Union Street, South, Concord, NC, 28025 and the mailing address is P.O. Box, 308, Concord, NC 28026:

Questions and inquiries should be sent in writing or via email to Scott Adams, adamss@ci.concord.nc.us. Answers to any questions presented will be distributed to all persons and firms who have received the RFQ. Please submit any questions no later than **September 22, 2015**. No inquiries, if received within ten (10) days of the date set for receipt of qualification submittals, will be given any consideration.

Contact with anyone within the City organization other than those listed above may result in the company being eliminated from consideration. Contact with these individuals will be exclusively for clarification regarding procedures and objectives. The City also prohibits communication to or with any department, bureau or employee during the submission process. In addition, no communications may be initiated by a proposer to any City Official or persons involved in evaluating or considering the proposals prior to the time an award decision has been made.

Revisions to the RFQ

The City of Concord retains the right to modify this request. All additional information, changes or revisions shall be mailed to all respondents.

Submittal Validation Period

Submittals shall be valid until the City of Concord has completed an award action. Firms that take exception to this will be considered non-responsive and will be rejected.

Rejection of Submittals

The City of Concord also reserves the right at its sole discretion to reject any or all submittals, without penalty, and to not issue a contract as a result of this request. Concord reserves the right at its sole discretion, to waive any irregularity contained in any submittal, to re-advertise for a new RFQ, and to extend the deadline for submission.

Responsible Firm Evaluation

The City of Concord shall only consider responsible firms whom, in the sole judgment of the City, have the experience, resources, skills, capacity, reliability, and business integrity necessary to perform the requirements of the contract. The City will consider references and other information available to the City whether specifically provided by the respondent or otherwise. During the evaluation process the City may elect to entertain questions confidentially to preserve the trade or business practices of respondents.

Costs to Submit

The City of Concord will not be liable for any costs incurred by any respondent in preparation of a submittal in response to this request, in conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related to response to this RFQ.

Disclosure and Disclaimer

The RFQ is for informational purposes only. Any action taken by the City of Concord in response to RFQ submittals made pursuant to the RFQ, or in making any award or failing or refusing to make any award, shall be without any liability or obligation on the part of the City or any of its officers, employee or advisors.

The RFQ is being provided by the City without any warranty or representation, expressed or implied, as to its content, accuracy, or completeness. Any reliance on the information contained in the RFQ, or on any communications with the City or City officials or employees, shall be at the developer's own risk. Firms should rely exclusively on their own investigations, interpretations and analysis in connection with this matter. The RFQ is made subject to correction of errors, omissions, or withdrawal without notice. The RFQ does not constitute an offer by the City. The City's determination as to the qualifications and acceptability of any party or parties submitting in response to the RFQ shall be made at the sole discretion of the City.



Attachment "A"

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITY

Name of Business _____

Business Address _____

Business Phone _____ **Fax** _____

Contact Name _____

Business Classification (Check all that apply)

_____ Individual

_____ Corporation

_____ Women or Minority Owned

_____ Partnership

Name of Owner _____

Federal ID/ Social Security Number _____

A. During the past five years, have you been subject to bond forfeiture, litigation or claims? If yes, please attach an explanation. ____ Yes ____ No

B. Has firm been in bankruptcy, reorganization or receivership in the last 5 years? ____ Yes ____ No

C. Has firm been disqualified by any public agency from public contracts? ____ Yes ____ No

D. Has the firm operated at least 2 years without interruption? ____ Yes ____ No



NON-COLLUSION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Firms shall disclose below, to the best of his or her knowledge, any City of Concord official or employee, or any relative of any such official or employee, who is an officer, partner, director or proprietor of, or has a material interest in the Firm's business or its parent company, any subsidiary, or affiliated company, whether such City official or employee is in a position to influence this procurement or not.

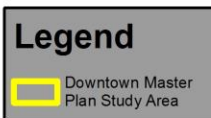
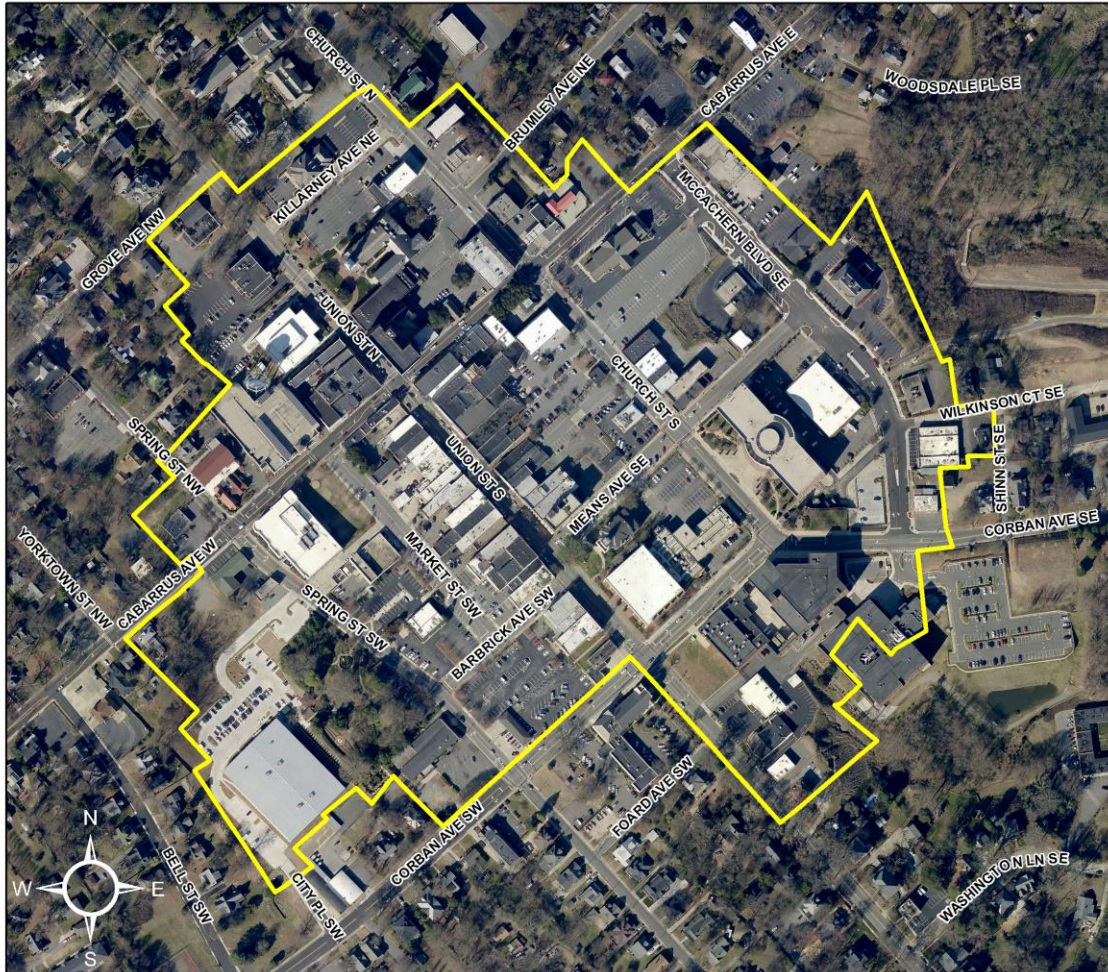
Failure of a Firm to disclose any relationship described herein shall be reason for disqualification.

Name	Relationship
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

In the event the Firm does not indicate any name, the City shall interpret this to mean that no such relationship exists.

Exhibit #1, Study Area

City of Concord Downtown Master Plan Study Area



1 inch = 350 feet

0 350 700
Feet

Coordinate System - NC State Plane NAD83

